

WORKERS WORLD

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DEC. 9, 2010 Vol. 52, No. 48 50¢

No war against Korea!

U.S. warships, jets are the real threat

By Deirdre Griswold

Scores of U.S. warships and fighter jets, carrying more than 6,000 crew members and reinforced by ships, planes and 70,000 soldiers of the armed forces of south Korea, began carrying out joint military “exercises” in the sea west of Korea on Nov. 28. They have brought the divided peninsula to the brink of war.

In July some 20 U.S. warships and 200 planes had carried out similar maneuvers with the armed forces of the south. So this is the second time in less than six months that Washington and the right-wing south Korean regime of Lee Myung-bak have carried out a grave provocation against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (socialist north Korea).

Nor can China, which lies just 200 miles to the northwest, fail to be alarmed at such aggressive military moves by the U.S. Two days before the joint maneuvers began, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said: “We hold a consistent and clear-cut stance on the issue. We oppose any party to take any military acts in our exclusive economic zone without permission.” (Xinhua, Nov. 26) Nevertheless, the U.S. and south Korea went right ahead with the maneuvers.

Hostilities began with shells fired at DPRK

This time the south Korean forces went a step further than in July. Days before the joint exercises with the U.S. were scheduled to begin, they fired live shells into the waters right off the DPRK from the island of Yeonpyeong, which lies far west of the south Korean mainland and very close to the coast of the DPRK. Both the island and the waters are disputed territory. The U.S. had arbitrarily drawn a line on a map years ago claiming the island for south Korea, but the DPRK has never accepted that.

Thus, the military that ordered these shells be fired at 1:00 p.m. on Nov. 23 knew full well that this was a brazen provocation against the DPRK — one that could easily lead to a response in kind, especially since the DPRK had already characterized the “exercises” as a simulated invasion of the north.

If south Korea and its huge sponsor, the U.S., had wanted to avoid confrontation with the DPRK, would they have fired shells into a disputed area?

MORE ON KOREA

- **WWP statement**
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The provocation comes from the U.S. and the Lee Myung-bak regime, not the DPRK.

An hour and a half later, at 2:34 p.m., after making immediate verbal protests, the DPRK retaliated by shelling the south’s military base on Yeonpyeong. According to officials in Seoul, two soldiers were killed. They later claimed that two civilians had died as well.

Immediately, the propaganda blast from both the U.S. and south Korea went to earsplitting levels, blaming the DPRK for “irrational” and “brutal” behavior. The Pentagon announced it would have to send the USS

George Washington — a nuclear-powered carrier with nearly 6,000 sailors and an air wing of 75 fighter jets that had taken part in the July “exercises” — plus five other warships to back up the forces of the Lee regime in joint naval maneuvers.

While the south Korean
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Los Angeles protest says 'JOBS, NOT WAR'

A Nov. 29 demonstration in Koreatown was attended by activists from anti-war, social justice and Korean organizations including KIWA (Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance), Answer Coalition, Cuba Coalition, BAYAN-USA, the International Action Center and Workers World Party.

WW PHOTOS: CHERYL LABASH

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Socialist revolution is road to women’s liberation

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk by Megan Spencer at the Workers World Party national conference. A student activist and WWP member, Spencer is a co-founder of the Coalition Against Sexual Violence at Michigan State University.

In globalized capitalism’s current crisis, women around the world are facing increased oppression and attacks. Capitalism is a racist, imperialist and misogynistic system that exploits women; colonizes, occupies and displaces people of color; and destroys the diversity of life on the planet. The many injustices that women worldwide are fighting against can be traced back to their capitalist roots.

Globalized capitalism, with its imperialist expansion, must be fought and ultimately destroyed through a socialist revolution that acknowledges and overcomes women’s oppression, and that recognizes women’s contributions and leadership in the struggle.

Under capitalism and patriarchy, women’s historic status as property resulted from the division of society into exploited and exploiting classes. Capitalism has enforced the idea that women can be reduced to resources for reproduction, which has devalued women’s work in and outside of the home. This and other social injustices that result from capitalism have translated into significant threats to women’s health and well-being, particularly for Indigenous women, women of color, immigrant and refugee women, Muslim women, working-class and poor women, queer and transgender women, disabled women, young women and girls, and older women.

Women around the world face violence and injustice every day, whether it’s economic violence, sexual and domestic violence, attacks on reproductive autonomy and food sovereignty, or ecological destruction. Many of capitalism’s injustices affect women especially adversely. They manifest in concrete ways in women’s lives. This is true in the United States and internationally.

Globalization is causing horrible consequences for women, especially women workers internationally. Because women and their work have been so devalued, women are especially underpaid and exploited in many workplaces, especially by transnational corporations.

In Juárez, Mexico, hundreds, maybe thousands of women working in maquiladoras have been tortured, mutilated and murdered. These murders have gone unsolved. The companies which employ the women offer little protection. These young women have the choice to go to work and risk being harassed, assaulted or killed, or to not work and suffer from the poverty that NAFTA [the North American Free Trade Agreement] has inflicted on Mexico.

Capitalism intensifies attacks

Capitalism is reaching its limits, and intensifying the attacks that oppressed people already face. It’s not the bankers, politicians and capitalists who suffer from this, but workers, poor people, women and people of color. No bankers are losing their homes or worrying about how to



Megan Spencer, left, with Lauren Spencer.

Internationally, many crises are being fueled by capitalism. Millions of Haitians have been displaced and killed due to the January earthquake. Yet, the legacy of colonialism and imperialism has intensified this crisis, as the imperialist powers have failed to provide food, water and shelter to Haitians in need. Haitian women, who have lost homes and families, face sexual assault in the tent camps. Now, Haiti is facing the cholera epidemic.

In Pakistan, millions have been killed and displaced from their homes because of the climate-change-induced flood catastrophe, which put 20 percent of the country underwater. Displaced women face sexual assault, starvation and disease. Rather than providing aid to human beings who are in dire need, the U.S. imperialist war machine continues its destructive drone attacks on the region.

Militarism and imperialism as capitalist tools have negative consequences for women globally, especially in occupied countries in the Middle East such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. Militarism is misogynistic and homophobic in nature. Women face many types of violence during wars and occupations, and the policies put into place after these conflicts fail to address women’s needs, keeping them impoverished.

Ultimately, we need to be conscious of the struggles that women are facing within the context of capitalism, imperialism and militarism. We must recognize how the well-being of women is so closely linked to struggles for economic and environmental justice and against imperialism.

We must fight for a socialist revolution and align ourselves with the resistance and militant struggles that women around the world are engaged in, because women who are resisting injustice are facing a lot of repression and persecution.

Sister Ahlam Mohsen is a young woman of color who faces possible federal charges and an FBI investigation for speaking out against U.S. imperialism and militarism. She faces racism and anti-Arab repression for expressing solidarity with the people of Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

We stand with women around the world who are resisting capitalism, imperialism and misogyny, because we cannot fight for women’s liberation without addressing occupation, militarism and racism. Solidarity is a must. Down with capitalism! Build a Workers’ World! □

provide food and health care for their families, as people around the world are losing homes, jobs and funding for education and health care due to capitalist greed.

This is evident in the U.S. foreclosure crisis, which has devastated Detroit especially, but it is also happening because of gentrification and environmental disasters in other areas. Look at New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.

Indigenous women in the U.S. face high rates of rape, domestic violence and suicide, each of which is linked to their high rates of unemployment and poverty.

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Workers World Party (WWP) fights for socialism and engages in struggles on all the issues that face the working class & oppressed peoples — Black & white, Latino/a, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women & men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed & students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

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Indigenous peoples expose real ‘thanksgiving’ National Day of Mourning commemorated

**Special to Workers World
Plymouth, Mass.**

Nov. 25 — Hundreds of Native people and their supporters have gathered every year since 1970 in Plymouth, Mass., on “thanksgiving Thursday” to speak the truth about the history of the European invasion of the Americas and the consequences for Indigenous peoples.

At an outdoor rally on a hill overlooking Plymouth Rock, Moonanum James, co-leader of United American Indians of New England, noted that the first officially declared day of thanksgiving in Massachusetts was actually a celebration following the massacre of hundreds of Pequot people in Mystic, Conn., in 1637.

The UAINE leader continued: “Today, as we did in 1970, we mourn the loss of millions of our ancestors and the devastation of our beautiful land and water and air. We pray for our people who have died during this past year. And I hope you will join me in grieving, too, for the immense suffering of our sisters and brothers in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, in Palestine, in Iraq, all human beings who suffer and face on a daily basis acts of terror.

“We remember, too, the millions of people who are hungry today, whether they live in Boston or in Port-Au-Prince or Gaza. ... Remember what your ancestors went through to bring you here. We are like the dirt, like the sand, like the tides. We shall endure.”

Juan Gonzalez brought a message from the Maya Council of Elders. He also spoke about a Canadian mining corporation that is devastating sacred land of the Wixarikas in central Mexico. He noted that such theft of land and poisonous mining are happening in many places where tribal peoples live. Gonzalez said, “This destructive mining is the source of the minerals and metals required to maintain and enjoy our modern, high-tech world.” He called on people to reduce their use of technology in order to save the earth from destruction.

Struggles of Indigenous women

UAINE co-leader Mahtowin Munro spoke to the crowd about the status of Native women. “Our dispossession is key to understanding our lives, just as this wrenching experience is key to understanding the lives of our Palestinian sisters. Every attempt has been made by the U.S. and the other occupying governments in this hemisphere to strip us of our language, our culture, our rights as women, our leadership role as women and clan mothers.

“Violence against Indigenous women

has escalated, and the trafficking of Native women is rampant. Many Native women suffer from psychological stress and physical diseases because our economic, religious, political and social positions are devalued.”

Munro also spoke about how the right wing tries to turn any gains made by Native people into grounds for a racist attack. She ended by saluting the Six Nations (Iroquois) lacrosse team, whose members last summer refused to have their Native sovereignty denied by Britain and the U.S., and who were thus unable to travel to England to participate in the world lacrosse championships.

‘Free Leonard Peltier’

To the non-Native supporters in the crowd, Rosalba Gonzalez said: “We do this for you. When we talk about these things, about our history, it is important that you find out more, that you look things up. We want you to learn and understand.”

Tiokasin Ghosthorse spoke of Indigenous sovereignty, noting that in his language, Lakota, “There is no word for freedom because we are free already.” Ghosthorse gave an update about Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier.

Peltier’s family is very concerned about his health, in particular that he may have



Native peoples and supporters gather Nov. 25.

prostate cancer or some other serious condition, and is not getting proper diagnostic treatment. The Peltier Defense/Offense Committee has asked people to keep up the pressure on President Barack Obama to free Peltier, who is now 66.

Ghosthorse announced a vigil for Peltier in Washington, D.C., outside the Department of the Interior on Dec. 16 starting at 7 a.m. For more information, go to www.whoisleonardpeltier.info.

Bert Waters from the Massachusetts Indian Commission read a message from Peltier (see accompanying statement).

Message from Leonard Peltier

Following are excerpts from a statement made by Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier to the 41st National Day of Mourning in Plymouth, Mass., on Nov. 25.

Another year has gone by since the last time we gathered like this. I say we, because although I am not there with you in body, my spirit certainly is. We have coined this day, a day of mourning, as opposed to a day of thanksgiving. It’s a shame that thanksgiving is relegated to only one day. Mourning is something that relates to unhappy circumstances that have taken place.

This very day is ours. Tomorrow hasn’t happened yet and is uncertain. I don’t like to dwell on the mourning aspects of life but instead on what we can do to prevent those unhappy and sometimes terrible times in our history. The union organizer, Joe Hill, was framed by the copper mine owners to be executed. He said what really needs to be said upon his death: “Don’t mourn, organize.” Those are my sentiments.

There are many things that happened in the past that can be prevented in the future. There are losses that can be re-

gained. However, we must organize to do it. Dark moments come and go in all our lifetimes. And there are those in political office, who will try to turn your head away from the obvious truths. They will lie to you about what they believe. ...

... Our Sacred Black Hills of South Dakota, sacred to many tribes, have the faces of many of our oppressors carved on them. The place of vision seeking, Bear Butte in South Dakota, sacred to us for millennia, has a bar built at the foot of it and there is talk of having helicopter flights around it to attract tourism. There is even talk of drilling for oil and gas.

Every time I write a statement, I think of what I would say if this was the last time I spoke. The thing that comes to mind is in some of our sacred ceremonies, and that is thoughts of our relationships with the ones we love and the Creator of all life. ... If you can hold the person you love, walk on green grass, or touch a tree, be thankful. If you can breathe air that didn’t come through a ventilation system, or through a window with bars, be thankful. If you can stand in an open field, and look up at

the heavens, be thankful.

No one appreciates the simple things as much as a man or woman locked away. I have not for a moment forgotten the needs of my people and the atrocities committed against them or the circumstances that all the poor and impoverished face in this world at the hands of those who take more than they need and exploit for gain the futures of our children.

I wrestle with what to say to you and words are sometimes so inadequate. So if you are free today, un-imprisoned, be thankful. May you find joy in doing what is right and righting what is wrong and seek to be the best example of what a human should be in our lifetime.

In the Spirit of those we mourn, those who gave their lives and those whose lives were taken from them.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse, who gave his life for what was right and tried to right what was wrong.

*Your Brother,
Leonard Peltier*



Fight to free U.S. political prisoners

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk by Gloria Verdieu at the Workers World Party national conference. Verdieu is an organizer with the San Diego International Action Center and the San Diego Coalition to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Freeing all political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and prisoners of war is at the top of the list in the struggle for social justice, because the state uses the criminal justice system to lock up those who sacrifice their livelihood for freedom and justice for the masses.

The U.S. government claims there are no political prisoners here, yet there are politi-

cal prisoners in jails throughout the U.S. They make up the majority of the more than 2 million people locked up in U.S. prisons. A political prisoner is someone held in prison or otherwise detained for his or her involvement in political activity.

There are also prisoners in exile. Assata Shakur has been exiled in Cuba for 31 years.

One of the most well-known political prisoners is Mumia Abu-Jamal. He has been on Pennsylvania’s death row for 28 years. A revolutionary,



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

Gloria Verdieu

Mumia speaks out against social injustice wherever it shows its ugly face.

Native American Leonard Peltier, imprisoned for 33 years, is an activist and member of the American Indian Movement. In 2009, he was granted a full hearing before the United States Parole Commission; his parole was denied.

Sundiata Acoli has been in prison for 38 years. The state gave him a 20-year hit, the longest one in New Jersey’s history,

to attempt to force him to renounce his political beliefs and tell the world that he was wrong to struggle for the liberation of his people. In 1992, he was denied parole.

The MOVE 9 Charles, Debbie, Delbert, Edward, Janet, Janine, Michael and William Africa — have been imprisoned in Pennsylvania for 32 years. The remaining eight women and men were denied parole. As a condition for parole, they must renounce MOVE and their deeply held religious beliefs.

The Cuban Five are Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González; *Continued on page 10*

Chilean revolutionary demands political asylum

By Teresa Gutierrez

The struggle to demand political asylum for Chilean revolutionary Victor Toro continues. Toro, who is undocumented, was racially profiled in July 2007 by immigration agents on an Amtrak train in upstate New York.

Toro's next court date is Dec. 6. Everyone in the New York area is urged to pack the courtroom at the hearing scheduled for 1 p.m. and the protest outside the court at 26 Federal Plaza at noon.

In Chile, Toro was a leader and founder of the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left). The MIR is well-known and revered by revolutionaries worldwide as it led an extraordinary revolutionary struggle in Chile, in particular in the early 1970s.

In that period, a U.S.-orchestrated fascist coup massacred tens of thousands of Chileans when U.S.-backed right-wing military generals overturned the pro-socialist government of President Salvador Allende. Within a few days after Allende's overthrow, a U.S. puppet regime headed by Gen. Augusto Pinochet took over. On Sept. 11, 1973, Allende was assassinated.

This bloody time will be forever remembered not just by Chileans but also by anti-imperialists and revolutionaries worldwide. Tens of thousands were beaten, tortured, maimed and killed during the Pinochet regime.

It was also a time of heroic struggle as Chilean workers, peasants, women and all working-class sectors carried out militant and fearless resistance, a resistance that has not been vanquished to this day.

A case against imperialism

The continued resistance in Chile is why Toro is not being tried solely on his immigration status.

The Justice Department decided months ago to turn this case into a case against the Chilean movement and, by extension, the Latin American movement. The U.S. government ominously brought up Toro's political affiliation with the

MIR, deciding to put the MIR on trial as well as Toro.

Toro, however, took this not as a setback but as an opportunity to put U.S. imperialism and its role in the bloody coup of 1973 on trial.

The U.S. government submitted documents to the court that repeatedly named Toro as a principal leader of the MIR and defamed him as a "dangerous extremist." By asserting that MIR is a terrorist organization, it takes Toro's case out of the realm of immigration law and into the so-called "war on terror."

Carlos Moreno, Toro's lawyer, argues that much of the Pinochet regime still lingers in Chile and deportation could lead to his client's assassination. He says it will be difficult for an immigration judge to counter the "terrorism" charge and grant Toro political asylum.

Toro continues to emphatically stress that his case is not about him individually, but is a case to document the U.S. role in Chile as well as the 14 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S.

At Toro's October hearing, Toro's family, his spouse Nieves Ayres and daughter Rosita, testified. Ayres is also a leader and organizer, a co-founder of La Peña del Bronx, a longtime community activist and a key representative of the May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights. She herself was a victim of fascist torture during the Pinochet coup.

Toro told Workers World on Nov. 23 that at the Dec. 6 hearing his defense will continue to raise political developments such as Operation Condor. This was a U.S.-sponsored network of terrifying secret police agents that operated in the Southern Latin American Cone in the 1970s and coordinated horrific attacks against left and working-class forces.

The hearing will also include testimony from prominent academics such as professor Peter Winn, a professor of history at Tufts University specializing in Latin America and Chile in particular. According to Toro's attorney, Winn's testimony is sig-



Victor Toro

PHOTO: MAY 1ST COALITION FOR WORKER AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

nificant because he has traveled extensively in Chile and is the author of several books on that country. He is expected to testify about how allegations that MIR is a terrorist organization are far from the truth.

Chile today

Toro's case is as relevant to developments in Chile today as it is to those of the 1970s.

The movement and conditions in Chile have erupted and made international news this year. The earthquake in February; the case of the 33 trapped copper miners; the struggle of the Indigenous tribe, the Mapuches; and current hunger, women's and miners' strikes are all examples of a growing revolutionary fervor in Chile.

"All the various class forces are in motion: students, women, workers, campesinos, the Indigenous people are all organized and mobilized," Toro says.

Recently 33 women occupied the Chiftón del Diablo mine to demand the reinstatement of an emergency jobs program that had been launched after the February earthquake. More than 8,000 workers were left jobless, which followed the elimination of another 9,500 temporary positions.

Another struggle is raging in another mine in Chile, the Collahuasi mine, in yet another example of the threat Chilean workers are to capitalist interests.

WW asked Toro about the MIR today.

He said that sadly the MIR currently has many different factions but that he supports all of them. Toro remains confident that the MIR will evolve into the main organization that will help to lead the working class to final victory in Chile.

A statement on the 45th anniversary of the founding of the MIR in August of this year, entitled, "With experience, with the youth, with strength and with unity," states in part: "To the workers and people of Chile ... to the Mapuche political prisoners on hunger strike ... our history is no more than the history of a people that struggles for its liberation. ... We have passed through great periods of struggle and resistance, we have been dealt a tremendous blow. Our MIR has had the streets filled with young and courageous blood of our people in the struggle for emancipation, the construction of people's power and the struggle for socialism, a struggle that we have not given up and that today fills our hearts with dreams the same as in the past."

Toro and Ayres are correct to make Toro's trial about U.S. imperialism. It is another courageous act of resistance by Chilean revolutionaries who have faced the repressive arm of imperialism head-on and have not blinked or turned away.

The progressive movement in the U.S. must continue to demand political asylum for Victor Toro and imperialist hands off the MIR. Long live the struggle in Chile! □

Fracking, the environment & capitalism in crisis

Following are excerpts from a Nov. 13 talk at the Workers World Party national conference given by Betsey Piette, an organizer of the Philadelphia branch of WWP and a WW contributing editor.

Capitalism cannot recover in any way helpful to the planet's people or ecology. But what is the price of letting capitalism drag on indefinitely?

It's a price being paid by people living atop the Marcellus Shale rock formation spanning New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, which contains 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas worth trillions of dollars.

The gas industry calls the Marcellus Shale "shale gale" — a perfect storm for maximizing profits.

The industry, eager to exploit that gas, isn't letting the planet's future get in its way. An environmental disaster waiting to happen — hydraulic fracturing or fracking — may be coming close to you.

Fracking was developed by Halliburton. It involves injecting millions of gallons of water containing toxic and carcinogenic chemicals into shale formations to release natural gas. There are nearly a million wells in 38 states. Wells are being

fracked in 70 countries.

Half the fluid returns to the surfaces as briny wastewater that may contain radioactive particles. Wastewater is trucked off or stored in open-air pits on site where it evaporates. It is being dumped along Pennsylvania highways for "weed control." Spills of frack fluid occur daily.

The 2005 Energy Policy Act exempts hydraulic fracturing from regulation, so it's not known what chemicals are in frack fluid. But people are experiencing their effects — nausea, skin rashes, and brain and nerve disorders.

Tap water can be lit on fire. Water wells are permanently poisoned. Many fish and animals have been killed.

In northern Texas, 25 percent of children have asthma, though the average is 7 percent statewide. More than 10,000 gas wells, built near schools and playgrounds, carpet Fort Worth.

Once pristine forested areas of Colorado are completely industrialized. Methane gas bubbles in the Susquehanna River, a



WW PHOTO: ALAN POLLOCK

Betsey Piette

WWP NATIONAL CONFERENCE:
DOWN WITH CAPITALISM,
FIGHT FOR WORLD SOCIALISM!

major tributary in the Delaware watershed and a New York City water source.

The documentary "Gasland" shows the extent of this problem.

A movement to ban drilling is growing, but the industry has ignored it and has spent millions to elect politicians who will block regulations.

The International Energy Agency estimates that North America sits atop 3 trillion barrels of oil and 1 quadrillion cubic feet of natural gas. Corporations are eagerly building pipelines across the U.S. to bring gas to seaports for export.

Chevron Corp. just entered the Marcellus Shale arena, paying \$4.3 billion for Atlas Energy Inc. Range Resources sold off holdings in the Texas Barnett Shale to invest \$1.2 billion in Marcellus, the "new frontier." Exxon, Shell and Schlumberger paid top prices to take over smaller companies.

Onshore natural gas production increased more than 20 percent in recent

years, creating a long-lasting gas glut. Overproduction is driving prices down. Federal regulations might create an incentive for more drilling by causing higher gas costs, but capitalism is not a rational system.

Gas companies paid off politicians in Pennsylvania to stop a gas tax. They gave more than \$1 million to governor-elect Tom Corbett, who reciprocated by appointing Christine Toretta, owner of SW Jack Drilling, to his transition team.

Corbett promises to rescind a recent executive order against leasing 800,000 more acres of state forest for drilling. He supports legislation allowing companies to drill even when landowners refuse to sign leases. The industry wants the state to overrule local prohibitions against drilling, like a recent Pittsburgh ban.

Karl Rove, flush with pro-drilling candidates' electoral victories, told a drillers' conference in Pittsburgh that environmentalists "won't be able to pass climate-change legislation. ... Climate's gone."

Fortunately, many people reject this notion. Hundreds of anti-fracking demonstrators rallied outside that conference. They represent a growing anti-fracking

Continued on page 10

On the Picket Line

By Sue Davis

Florida nurses join union

On Nov. 15, 550 registered nurses at Osceola Regional Medical Center in Kissimmee, Fla., voted overwhelmingly to join the National Nurses Organizing Committee-Florida, an affiliate of National Nurses United. Of the RNs voting, 92 percent agreed to be represented by NNOC-Florida. The hospital is part of the Hospital Corporation of America, the largest hospital system in the U.S. The nurses at Osceola are the first at several HCA hospitals in Florida who will soon vote on affiliation with NNOC-Florida. After the Osceola RNs choose leaders to represent them in contract talks, they will negotiate their first contract. Key issues include nurse-to-patient staffing ratios, a patient-care monitoring committee run by direct-care RNs, and improved health coverage and retirement benefits. As labor and delivery nurse Sharon Bray said, “Through NNOC-Florida, Osceola RNs can truly put patients first. With the support of all our colleagues, we can work together to build nurse power and strengthen our voice in our hospital and beyond.” (AFL-CIO blog, Nov. 16)

Michigan nurses avoid strike

Registered nurses and health care professionals at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing, Mich., reached a tentative agreement Nov. 18 on a new three-year contract, avoiding both a strike and a lockout set for Nov. 22. The 2,100 employees, members of the Michigan Nurses Association/Professional Employees Council of Sparrow Hospital, an affiliate of National Nurses United, had voted to strike Nov. 22 if no agreement had been reached. Meanwhile hospital management had threatened to lock them out if they did not accept its final offer. Under the agreement, both sides withdrew their threatened actions. Some of the terms include increased nurse staffing levels, a wage increase, and changes in the health and retirement programs. Sparrow RNs had said their main priority was to elevate the standard of care for patients and community. Increased nurse staffing levels will help. (AFL-CIO blog, Nov. 19)

Atlantic City casino dealers ratify first contract

In mid-November, three years after joining the United Auto Workers, dealers at Caesars Atlantic City Casino were finally able to vote on their first contract, which contained 18 percent raises and improved benefits. This is the second such pact approved by Atlantic City dealers in three months. The first was at the Tropicana Casino & Resort, where dealers won similar raises. Full and part-time dealers and slot technicians at Trump Plaza and Bally’s also voted to join the UAW in 2007, but casino operators have either refused to bargain or stalled negotiations. (AFL-CIO blog, Nov. 18)

Support fair election for Delta flight attendants

After a Nov. 3 announcement that Delta flight attendants had lost union representation by 328 votes out of more than 18,000 cast, the Association of Flight Attendants-Communication Workers of America vowed to file interference charges with the National Mediation Board against Delta Air Lines. AFA-CWA did so on Nov. 23, charging the airline had used intimidation and other unlawful tactics to unfairly influence the vote. The union claims Delta compromised the secrecy of the ballot by urging workers to vote on company-controlled work computers where management could track employee e-mails. Hundreds of Delta attendants (many former Northwest employees who have had collective bargaining rights for more than 60 years) submitted reports outlining management actions, including excessive surveillance by supervisors and repeated calls to personal phones, designed to influence the election. The NMB can order an election rerun if it finds sufficient evidence of interference. To support Delta flight attendants, sign a petition telling Delta CEO Richard Anderson to respect workers’ right to bargain collectively. Go to www.change.org and search for the petition “Tell Delta to stop union busting.” (CWA, Nov. 23) □

Rise in fracking accidents prompts anti-drilling rallies

By Betsey Piette

Contrary to gas drilling industry claims that hydraulic fracturing is “accident free,” Texas-based XTO Energy has racked up 31 violations at 20 wells drilled in the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania in 2010.

XTO’s latest accident involved a leak of up to 13,000 gallons of chemically contaminated drilling wastewater that polluted a stream and a spring in north-central Pennsylvania’s Lycoming County, says the state’s Department of Environmental Protection. The leak was caused by a valve which was left open.

In June, Exxon paid \$30 billion to merge with XTO Energy, making Exxon/XTO the largest natural gas producer in the U.S.

Hydraulic fracturing involves blasting millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals into wells to break apart shale and release natural gas. The wastewater that returns to the surface is a toxic, sometimes radioactive, sludge containing sulfates, benzene, chloride, toluene and other chemicals used in the fracking process.

Accidents like the one in Lycoming County occur at the rate of nearly one a day at wells across the Marcellus Shale, which spans the states of Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia and Ohio.

A Scripps Howard News Service

investigation of the drilling industry over the last decade found 1,972 violations for pollution and contamination in Ohio.

Pennsylvania officials have issued 8,309 industry-related violations since 2007. The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association found 1,056 serious environmental violations tied to drilling in the shale between the start of 2008 and Aug. 20 of this year. Gas companies improperly sealed their wells 50 times, potentially causing gas to migrate into groundwater.

“There’s so many more violations that we’re trying to keep on top of,” said Jamie Legenos, spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. (Scripps News, Nov. 18). One problem the investigation notes is the lack of proper paperwork or follow-up due to understaffed oversight agencies.

The lack of federal and state regulations contributes to this problem, with drilling companies frequently ignoring local laws intended to limit the environmental impact. In the last three years, the natural gas industry has tripled state campaign contributions to guarantee election of pro-drilling candidates like Pennsylvania’s governor-elect, Tom Corbett.

This has prompted anti-drilling activists to sound the alarm and increase their mobilizing activities

against fracking.

Gas Truth of Central Pennsylvania is calling for an inauguration day rally against “Toxic Tom” on Jan. 18 in Harrisburg, the state capital. Rally demands include a moratorium on further drilling in the state; regular inspections of existing wells; disclosure of the chemicals used in fracking; and no “forced pooling” (allowing gas companies to drill when properties border those with existing wells even if landowners refuse to sign leases).

A “warm-up” rally is planned for Dec. 6 in Wellsboro, Pa., where former Pennsylvania governor and Homeland Security chief, Tom Ridge, is “shilling for drilling” at a Chamber of Commerce breakfast. Ridge, now a drilling industry consultant, is suspected of being behind recent spying on anti-drilling activists by the Institute of Terrorism Research and Response under a no-bid contract with the Pennsylvania Homeland Security.

Wellsboro, in Tioga County, was also the site of a 35-mile spill of fracking fluids along a highway in October.

Under capitalism, the drive for profits overtakes everything, including protection of the environment. It is important that both upcoming rallies will target corporate greed as the factor behind the public policies that are affecting the water, land and air in the state. □

Campaign vs. Chase Bank kicks off

The People Before Banks Coalition held a volunteers meeting Nov. 20 at the Central United Methodist Church in downtown Detroit. The coalition is organizing a mass leafleting campaign demanding that Chase Bank impose a two-year moratorium on home foreclosures and that the financial institution stop bankrolling R.J. Reynolds Co., which is denying rights and decent working



Atty. Vanessa Fluker.

conditions to migrant farmworkers in North Carolina’s tobacco fields.

This coalition grew up around the U.S. Social Forum in June when more than a thousand people marched on Chase Bank in Detroit.

Participants at the Nov. 20 meeting included attorney Vanessa Fluker

of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition; the Rev. Bill Wylie-Kellerman, pastor of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church; labor writer and activist Steve Babson; and the Rev. Ed Rowe, pastor of Central United Methodist Church.

The coalition will leaflet dozens of Chase Bank locations on Dec. 3 to encourage customers to withdraw their funds if the bank doesn’t agree to a moratorium on foreclosures and justice for migrant farmworkers.

— **Report and photo**
by **Abayomi Azikiwe**

A California activist’s post-election reflections

Time to ramp up struggle for workers’ rights

By **starr**
San Diego

Mailboxes are no longer crammed full of expensive election campaign propaganda. TV sets have gone back to the mind-numbing drone of reality shows. We voters were sullied relentlessly all summer long; it reached a fevered pitch by late October.

What did we, the workers and the voters, want to hear? What we have always wanted to hear — information. We didn’t want shiny campaign ads — we wanted details. Like how to figure out California’s budget shortfalls. How to prevent the state government in Sacramento and municipalities, such as Bell, Calif., from taking workers’ wages. How to restore mental health services, which have been gutted in recent years while the privileges of the wealthy remain intact.

But very little of this ever came up in the campaign. Instead, many on the right, and a good number of centrists,

used so-called “illegal immigration” as their primary talking point. Their goal was to divide and conquer.

To this writer’s knowledge no California candidate took a stand against racist Arizona law SB 1070, nor vowed to stop rabidly racist Sheriff Joe Arpaio. A disturbing trend of violence against day laborers here in California can be traced directly to Arpaio’s influence.

Cowards, all! The candidates threw money around while Californians phase out of their own unemployment benefits. One in five children in California is starving. Three in five kids in certain communities report feeling hungry “on an ongoing basis.”

While it would be easy to sit back now, post-election, and listen to the silence, we must resist the temptation. We have got to redouble our efforts to restore workers’ rights statewide — for teachers, construction workers, line workers, day laborers, students.

A coalition of community groups is

organizing here in San Diego, based on the Puente model being utilized with great success in Arizona. Community organizers there took to the streets by day, storming Sheriff Arpaio’s jailhouse in Phoenix, and to the neighborhoods by evening, talking to local residents, assisting families of the detained and deported. Activists with night-vision equipment filmed children left abandoned in cars while family members were detained and eventually deported. Food banks and “Know Your Rights” workshops serve local people who are feeling the hit of racism.

In San Diego we are focusing on the City Heights area, where many undocumented workers live in terror of raids and the threat of deportation. Their “crime”? Working at a car wash or in the fields.

This is the sort of action that can combat complacency. Only those representing workers should get elected, until we workers ourselves take power. □

SOLIDARITY WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S R

International League of Peoples’ Struggle condemns U.S. war threats

The following statement was issued on Nov. 26 by Professor Jose Maria Sison, chairperson of the International League of Peoples’ Struggle.

We, the International League of Peoples’ Struggle, condemn in the strongest possible terms the recent and ongoing provocations being made by the U.S. and the south Korean puppet govern-

ment against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

We refer to the mobilization of 70,000 troops for a week of military maneuvers just off the border of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in order to simulate an invasion of the DPRK. ...

The south Korean puppet forces fired many shells into territorial waters of the DPRK on Nov. 23 at 1 p.m. Only after an

hour and a half later did the DPRK retaliate in self-defense by firing shells at the Yonphyong Islet held by south Korea.

The south Korean puppet forces have made the provocations obviously at the instigation of the U.S. U.S. officials and mass media have misrepresented the DPRK as the one making the provocations and have quickly beaten the war drums for the deployment of U.S. forces and weap-

ons of mass destruction against the DPRK.

In a far bigger act of war provocation, the U.S. has announced plans to send the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS George Washington and its battle group, including war ships, destroyers and hundreds of fighter jets, into the area to participate in new military exercises to threaten the DPRK.

Let us recall that the U.S. military forces have been involved in all the war maneuvers by south Korea, going back to the 1950-53 war, have killed millions of the Korean people and have occupied south Korea since the end of World War II.

We demand that the U.S. withdraw its 30,000 troops from south Korea in order to allow the peaceful reunification of Korea and let the Korean people exercise their right to national self-determination.

We demand that immediately the U.S. and South Korea stop their war maneuvers and exercises against the DPRK. They must remove their warships from the territorial waters of the DPRK. The U.S. must end the sanctions it has instigated against the DPRK.

Long live the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea!

Down with U.S. imperialism and its south Korean puppets!

Long live the Korean people of both north and south! □

Global anti-imperialist group denounces war exercises

The following statement was released Nov. 30 by Manik Mukherjee, Vice President of the All India Anti-imperialist Forum and General Secretary of the International Anti-imperialist and People’s Solidarity Coordinating Committee.

The International Anti-imperialist and People’s Solidarity Coordinating Committee denounces the conspiracy of the U.S. imperialists to heighten the war tension in East Asia by launching a joint military exercise with south Korea in the Yellow Sea.

The U.S. has long been militarily

threatening the [the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea] with a view to staging a counter-revolutionary overthrow of socialism in DPRK and bringing about a “regime change” there. The present joint military drill is another such exercise directed against the DPRK.

We also condemn India’s pro-imperialist stand on this issue. Instead of strongly voicing a demand for stopping the joint military exercise, it has taken an ambivalent stand by appealing to both parties to maintain peace, thereby effectively taking side with the imperialist camp.

However, it is heartening that the peo-

ple in south Korea are beginning to see through the nefarious design of the U.S. and are staging protests against the joint exercise, holding placards proclaiming, “No War” and “We Want Peace.”

The IAPSCC demands that the U.S. totally withdraw its military presence in the Korean region and allow the two Koreas to peacefully resolve their differences through mutual dialogues.

IAPSCC calls upon all the peace-loving people of the world to rise up in protest against the U.S. war maneuvers and to build up a strong global international movement against the imperialist war designs. □

No war against Korea! U.S. warships, jets are the real threat

Continued from page 1
military ultimately takes its orders from the Pentagon, the U.S. claimed it had not been involved with the south Korean “exercises” at the time of the exchange of artillery. But the facts show otherwise. CNN.com on Nov. 23 reported that “Some U.S. forces had been helping the South Koreans in a military training exercise, but were not in the shelled area.” Right. They were part of the provocation but stayed out of range. Like U.S. “advisers” in Vietnam in the early years of that war.

However, even with a media blitz focused on inventing reasons for north Korean “aggression,” sometimes an article slips through that blows a hole in the fairy tales.

Thomas D. Farrell, a former U.S. Army Reserve intelligence officer who served in Korea and says he is “no apologist for North Korea,” explains how these events were seen by the DPRK: “This attack occurred on an island in the West (Yellow) Sea. Although there is a clearly defined Military Line of Demarcation on land, there is no clearly defined line running into the ocean. The so-called Northern Limit Line has never been accepted by North Korea, and has been the subject of many skirmishes over the years. A look at a map shows that Yeonpyeong Island is rather close to North Korea. The ROK [south Korean] Navy was dropping shells in nearby waters as part of its annual Hoguk military exercises which, like all military exercises, are condemned by the North Koreans as a provocation and rehearsal for invasion.

“The point is that when one views this event from the mindset of the other side, it is perfectly understandable. The grand theories attempting to explain it are gaseous. The real story is that the North Ko-

reans saw the ROK Navy’s actions as a provocation and responded as they might well be expected to.” (Honolulu Star Advertiser, Nov. 29)

China also feels threatened

The imperialist media are saying that the DPRK’s “belligerence” is trying the patience of China. China has been an ally of the DPRK since 1950, when U.S. forces under the command of Gen. Douglas McArthur invaded north Korea, bombed all its cities, and threatened the new revolutionary government of China with nuclear war.

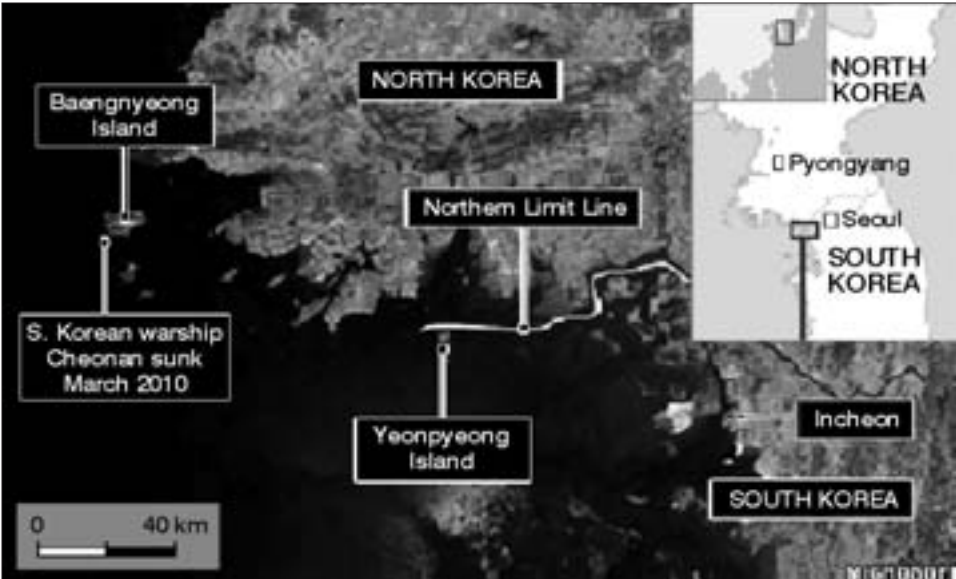
But while China is seeking a peaceful solution to the present crisis, there can be no doubt that it sees U.S. belligerence toward the DPRK as a threat to its own peaceful development.

Li Jie, a researcher with the Chinese navy’s military academy, wrote about the U.S.-south Korean “exercises” scheduled for last July:

“A joint drill with the ROK [south Korea] in the key waters off its Asian military bases will help the U.S. realize multiple strategic goals in the Asia-Pacific region,” said Li.

“First, the drill will help the U.S. maintain high-pressure against what it calls a restive DPRK regime. It is also believed to be an explicit indication of the U.S. stance that the world’s sole superpower would stand firmly behind the ROK and Japan in case of a military conflict between Pyongyang and Washington’s two traditional Asian allies.

“In addition, a well-deliberated military exercise in the Yellow Sea will also help the U.S. collect geographic and military information about some Asian countries [especially China — d.g.] bordering the vast waters.



“General Ma Xiaotian, deputy chief of general staff of the People’s Liberation Army, has expressed ‘firm opposition’ to the scheduled U.S.-ROK military maneuver.” (China Daily, July 12)

But the July maneuvers took place anyway, and are now being repeated at an even higher level of provocation. China has called for an emergency meeting with the U.S., south Korea, the DPRK, Russia and Japan to defuse the situation. As of Nov. 29, this call has been ignored by the Obama and Lee administrations.

There is nothing “irrational” in either the response of the DPRK or the worries of the Chinese. U.S. imperialism waged a horrendous war against the Korean Revolution from 1950 to 1953, one that resulted in millions of deaths. It has occupied south Korea ever since, with a force that still numbers almost 30,000. It has refused to even discuss a peace treaty to formally end that war.

Should it be surprising, then, that the DPRK knows it has to be ready at any time to repel another invasion? If even a retired U.S. Army intelligence officer knows that the shelling by the south would force the north to respond, didn’t those who ordered the shelling know it too? Wasn’t it deliberately intended to provide the excuse for greater threats against the DPRK, with the intention of provoking “regime change”?

U.S. pundits are now openly talking about the “reunification” of Korea based on the south swallowing up the north — in other words, an invasion and counterrevolution that would allow capitalism and imperialism a free hand to exploit the workers and farmers there.

This is something that the DPRK leaders and masses will never allow.

Is it surprising that the Chinese leaders are also alarmed when U.S. imperialism, while making money off investments and trade there, nevertheless tries to encircle China militarily?

The chair of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Michael Mullen, reveals the mindset of the Pentagon: “I don’t think this will be the last exercise,” he said. “This is a part of the world that we’ve exercised in for decades and we will continue.” (CNN, Nov. 28)

Instead of putting out anti-DPRK propaganda in the guise of psychoanalyzing its leaders, why don’t the media ask why the U.S. leaders do what they do? Why have they maintained a hostile policy against the DPRK for more than 60 years, ever since its anti-colonial and anti-capitalist revolution? Why won’t they sign a peace treaty with the DPRK so that the Korean people can work for real disarmament?

Continued on page 7

REPUBLIC OF KOREA 'U.S. OUT OF SOUTH KOREA'

WORKERS WORLD PARTY STATEMENT Stop U.S. aggression in Korea!

Workers World Party stands in complete solidarity with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at this critical moment, as U.S. imperialism and its client regime in south Korea are threatening war.

We reject the deafening blast of deceitful propaganda that presents the DPRK as the aggressor, even as it bravely holds off a potential invading force of hundreds of warships and fighter planes that have been deployed by Washington and Seoul in the West Sea near the DPRK.

The U.S. billionaire rulers have waged class war against the DPRK ever since it was founded by revolutionary forces, led by the legendary guerrilla fighter Kim Il Sung, who had ousted Japanese imperialism from the north of Korea and liberated the workers

and peasants there from colonial slavery.

The class of capitalist financiers and industrialists, who today are sucking the working class here dry to keep their record profits, could not tolerate a socialist north Korea. Through their economic and political control over Washington, they launched a devastating three-year war against the DPRK in 1950-53, killing millions of Koreans and tens of thousands of U.S. youth. But they could not break the will of the people in the north to be free of foreign domination.

These world-class exploiters never gave up their ambition to control all of Korea. That is why the U.S. has imposed sanctions on the north, maintains tens of thousands of troops in the south, and refuses to meet with the DPRK to sign a peace treaty ending the state of war that still exists, 57 years after the cease-

fire. They have left the DPRK no choice but to develop the means to defend itself against constant threats from Washington and the Pentagon.

The Korean people, north and south, want peace and the reunification of their divided country. Even as a war fever was being drummed up in Seoul, courageous demonstrators there demanded "No war!"

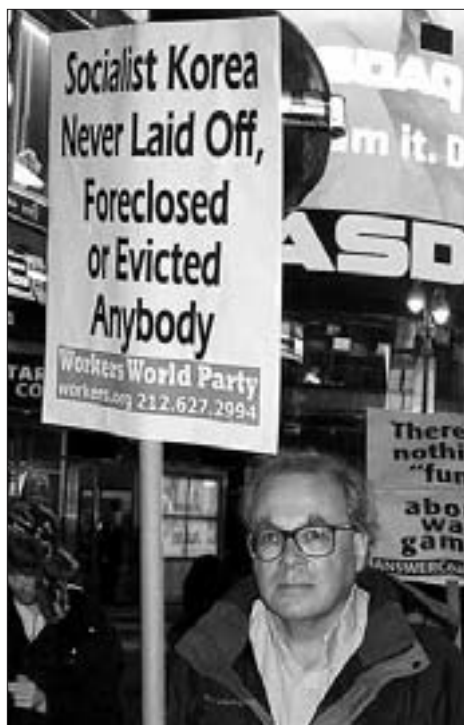
Workers and poor people in the U.S. are also sick and tired of the politicians' deadly priorities that put the enormous Pentagon budget ahead of vital human needs, even as hunger, unemployment, homelessness and ill health keep growing.

We demand: End the sanctions and the war threats! Bring U.S. troops and warships home now and sign a peace treaty with the DPRK! Money for jobs, schools, housing and health care, not for war! □

Times Square protest demands end to U.S. aggression in Korea

In the first of a series of actions in New York this week — buttressed by similar protest demonstrations in other parts of the U.S. — anti-war protesters marched near the military recruiting booth in Times Square to protest the latest U.S./south Korean joint war exercises in the sea near north Korea. About half of the demonstrators were from New York's Korean community.

Chants of "Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation!" alternated with demands that the U.S. finally sign a peace treaty with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, some-



thing that it has failed to do during the 57 years since the 1953 cease-fire armistice was signed.

The demonstration was called by the Answer Coalition and drew support from the Pakistan Freedom Forum, the International Action Center, the FIST youth group, the Philippine community and political organizations like Workers World Party and others.

At the ending rally, people announced protests scheduled in New York for Nov. 30 at a tree-lighting ceremony sponsored by General Electric, and on Dec. 1 and Dec. 3.

The Korean organization Nodutdol is circulating information about a Dec. 1 online action being organized by the Na-

tional Campaign to End the Korean War (endthekoreanwar.org). "Peace in Korea" will take place on Dec. 1 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. EST. See nodutdol.org.

The IAC has circulated an online petition that by Nov. 19 had 1,150 signers, including 110 organizations, and which has

been directed to more than 85,000 political officials and media. See iacenter.org.

The IAC has also called a protest for Friday, Dec. 3, from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., on the west side of Broadway between 33rd and 34th Street.

— Report & photos by John Catalinotto

ment and reunification?

But that would be to acknowledge that the U.S. is ruled by a class of billionaires that has fattened itself on war and exploitation all over the world and has a long history of creating excuses for the bloody expansion of its imperial reach. The media have been part of this inglorious history, ever since the Hearst papers invented an excuse for invading Cuba in 1898.

Let's not fall for another "Gulf of Tonkin" or "weapons of mass destruction" lie. The enemy of the working class is right here, in the boardrooms and banks of U.S. capitalism, that are taking away everything the workers have won over generations of struggle and hard work.

No aggression against socialist Korea! End the war "games," lift the sanctions, sign a peace treaty with the DPRK, and bring U.S. troops and ships home! □



Baltimore activists say 'No U.S. war in Korea'

Community activists took to the streets in Baltimore Nov. 30 during lunch hour to say no to U.S. war threats against Korea. They gathered at the corners of 33rd and Greenmount Avenue armed with signs and leaflets to get out information to people passing by.

An update and in-depth analysis of the crisis in Korea is scheduled Dec. 13 at the Baltimore Solidarity Center, 2011 N. Charles Street, 7 to 9 p.m. The forum will feature Workers World newspaper editor Deirdre Griswold, who has traveled to the DPRK and south Korea. She will address the meeting via webcam and Skype. The forum is part of the Workers World Party weekly discussions on socialism.

— Report and photo by Sharon Black

U.S. role in Costa Rica-Nicaragua border dispute

By **Berta Joubert-Ceci**

The latest conflict in Central America is a dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. It has hardly been covered in the U.S. media. Still it could increase U.S. military intervention and have dangerous consequences for the region’s stability.

One simple issue stands out: the two countries’ alliances. Costa Rica’s government is aligned with U.S. imperialism. Nicaragua is a member of the Bolivarian Alliance for Our America or ALBA, which includes Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Antigua and Barbuda. The U.S. State Department considers ALBA hostile to U.S. interests.

Nicaragua’s government is led by President Daniel Ortega, who also led the country during 1979-1990 after the Sandinistas (FSLN) overthrew the pro-U.S. Somoza dictatorship. Ortega faces election in 2011, one Washington would like to see him lose.

Washington has been able to use Costa Rica against its neighbors in the past. The U.S.-backed anti-Sandinista contras in the 1980s used Costa Rica as a safe base. In June 2009 the U.S.-sanctioned coup-makers in Honduras kidnapped President Manuel Zelaya and flew him to Costa Rica. Zelaya had also signed his country into ALBA.

Facts behind the border dispute

On Oct. 18 the Nicaraguan government began dredging the San Juan River, which flows from Lake Nicaragua to the Caribbean through Nicaragua. Part of it

forms the Nicaragua-Costa Rica border. Residue accumulated over the years made river transport to and from the Caribbean coast nearly impossible.

Nicaragua has been ravaged first by the 1980-1990 U.S.-Contra war against the Sandinista government and then by the next administration’s neoliberal policies. This history has left 75 percent of Nicaragua’s 6 million people in poverty.

To improve the economy of this extremely poor country, the government began developing transportation to increase exports, particularly to South America and other ALBA countries.

On Oct. 21 the Costa Rican government, led by right-wing President Laura Chinchilla, falsely accused Nicaragua of invading its territory and occupying Costa Rica’s Calero Island. On Oct. 22 Chinchilla sent a military contingent to the Nicaragua border and demanded Nicaragua stop dredging, which she claimed damaged the environment and violated Costa Rica’s sovereignty.

Costa Rica complained to the Organization of American States, the International Court of Justice in The Hague, and the Ramsar Convention, which deals with wetlands around the world, and requested a U.N. meeting on Nov. 29. Similar border disputes go back centuries. The one over the San Juan River, in particular, has always been ruled in Nicaragua’s favor.

An OAS team flew over Calero Island on Nov. 8 and reported that neither the Nicaraguan flag nor its army was there. Nevertheless, the Chinchilla government continues the accusations.

It’s also still fanning the flames of racism

and xenophobia against Nicaragua, and the half-million Nicaraguans living and working in wealthier Costa Rica face discrimination. However, Costa Rican groups, unions and political parties are not participating in this and are opposing their government’s actions.

Up to now, the Costa Rican government has refused Ortega’s request to begin bilateral negotiations.

Though the Costa Rican government promotes the country as an “ecological paradise,” there are contradictions. There are plans for open-air exploitation of a gold mine close to the San Juan River that would poison the waters with cyanide and other toxic chemicals. That activity is opposed by both Nicaraguan and Costa Rican environmental organizations working together. The timber industry and cattle raising are abundant in northern Costa Rica, causing environmental damage.

Even though Costa Rica does not have a formal army, according to a report published in “El Libro Blanco” (“The White Book: The Truths That Costa Rica Hides”), \$240.3 million per year is spent on the military — five times more than by Nicaragua. (el19digital.com)

The Nicaraguan military does patrol the San Juan River, intercepting any drug traffic that goes through the area. In early October the Nicaraguan army broke up a drug trafficking team in the river, arresting six people and informing Costa Rican authorities, since the team was operating from Costa Rica.

Washington’s role

The major threat not only to Nicaragua

but to the whole region is the deployment last July of 46 war ships, along with 7,000 U.S. troops, to Costa Rica on the pretext of fighting drug trafficking. Costa Rica has been on the U.S. president’s list of countries with the most illicit drug trafficking.

This has turned Costa Rica into a U.S. military base. U.S. troops can move, armed to the teeth, throughout the whole country and enjoy the characteristic impunity to any of their crimes that accompanies these imperialist enforcers throughout the world. Their contract to patrol ends at the end of 2010, but there are many places the U.S. military, once in, has refused to leave.

This move into Costa Rica fits with the increased U.S. military role in Latin America, including the re-establishment of the Fourth Naval Fleet, the Pentagon’s deal to use seven military bases in Colombia, the occupation of Haiti, new bases in Panama, and an additional U.S. base in Honduras. It is part of Washington’s confrontation with the ALBA countries, including the recent coup attempt in Ecuador.

It is crucially important for the progressive and anti-war movement in the U.S. to actively oppose the U.S. government’s hostile actions in Latin America and the Caribbean. This should not be separated from the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan and the threats against Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Washington should not be allowed to use a border dispute to wage war against the peoples of Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Email: hjceci@workers.org

Amid growing poverty, unemployment

Portugal shut down as 3 million workers strike

By **John Catalinotto**

During the 10 days Workers World visited Portugal starting Oct. 23, the working class and progressive movements there were preparing for two major actions.

They planned an anti-war protest for Nov. 20. That day 30,000 people marched against the summit of the NATO powers in Lisbon, where leaders of the major imperialist countries in Europe and North America plotted to use the former anti-Soviet alliance to police the world for the imperialist banks and corporations.

And they planned for a general strike on Nov. 24. It was the first massive workers’ action in Portugal in recent years to include both public and private sector workers, workers with job security and those whose jobs might be at risk. It was to answer the growing poverty among workers and the unemployed while corporate and banking profits are up.

The strike issues were similar to those workers have been facing throughout Europe, especially in the poorer countries. Through the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, European big capital has been attacking workers’ wages and government benefits with the pretext of cutting state budget deficits.

In Portugal, according to the main labor federation, the CGTP-IN, “The general strike is against: the so-called austerity measures; cuts in wages of public administration workers and workers from public enterprises and the general loss of

purchasing power of all workers; the rise in the cost of living; the bosses’ attacks on workers’ rights; the blockade of collective bargaining; the cuts in social protection, freezing of pensions for 3.5 million pensioners and cuts or elimination of children’s allowances for 1.5 million children and youngsters; and workers’ and people’s impoverishment and growing inequalities.” (grevegeral.net)

Portugal is one of the poorest of the West European countries and one with extremely unequal incomes. Its population is about 11 million, with about 5.6 million in the work force — some 10 percent are officially unemployed.

Most participation in decades

This is the union leadership’s assessment of the Nov. 24 general strike:

“The CGTP-IN considers that the general strike was an extraordinary success. With the participation of over 3 million workers, it was undoubtedly the largest ever trade union strike in our country. The strike was transversal, with enormous work stoppages, both in the public and private sectors, having involved workers of all professional categories.

“There was an outstanding participation in the transport sector, particularly with the total closure of all civil aviation and ports activity in the Portuguese mainland and islands, as well as massive participation (in some cases 100 percent) in the public and private transport companies, in all major cities and across the whole country. The participation was also

particularly high in education, health, local government and in the manufacturing industry, in several regions.”

The CGTP-IN reports that of 553 flights scheduled at the airports that day, “not one took off.” (grevegeral.net)

The editors at the Marxist website odario.info added these observations:

“Everyone at work, and throughout the country, participated: workers, employees, intellectual workers, artists and other cultural workers, men, women, youth. Workers in jobs without contract, who are targets of the most violent pressure and extortion, defied their precarious situation as shown, for example, in the significant participation in the supermarkets. ...

“Many thousands of workers struck for their first time in this amazing day of struggle. They will not forget, indeed, this day they took their place in the long struggle for the emancipation of labor. ...

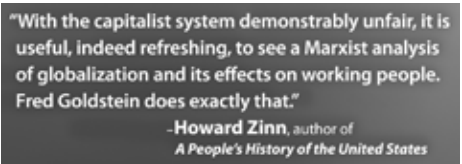
“The overwhelming reality was a country brought to a standstill by the will of its workers. Following a different policy and program, the same workers can bring the country out of the quagmire to which the

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EUROPE

Political crisis, class struggle & the state

On Nov. 27 there were demonstrations of more than 100,000 people in Dublin, Ireland, protesting the government's austerity program and about the same number of students and youth in Rome, Italy, protesting cutbacks in the education budget. These followed massive student protests in Britain earlier and a general strike in Portugal on Nov. 24 of 3 million workers. These popular actions in four countries were the defensive response to a relentless class war that big capital is waging to impoverish the European working class and steal back all the gains workers have made since 1945.

During the time the Soviet Union existed, the European bosses of each country would flinch before such a strong popular defense and would of-

fer concessions. Now, however, with seemingly no fear of an alternate social system, the bosses and bankers have organized through the European Union to concentrate their centralized forces against the workers of each country.

The following are excerpts from a Nov. 23 "El Otro País" article by Ángeles Maestro, a former member of Parliament in the Spanish state and a leader of the Corriente Roja (Red Current) group. The article was translated from Spanish by WW managing editor John Catalinotto.

Events are occurring at breathtaking speed in the European Union. Last May, the IMF, the EU and the European Central Bank decided to "rescue" Greece with 110 billion euros, and within a few days

created a permanent rescue fund of 750 billion euros (250 from the IMF and 500 from the EU states) to confront the threat of a contagion of Portugal and Spain, with the goal of ensuring "the health and stability of the euro." [On Nov. 29, 1 euro was worth about \$1.24.]

Recently the same screenplay used in Greece has been reworked. First came rumors about the insolvency of Ireland and Portugal, a soaring interest rate paid to debt purchasers, putting in doubt the countries' financial viability — both public and private — and discussing the risk of bankruptcy, all completely fabricated, with the corresponding government asking for a loan of billions of euros.

The Portuguese social-democratic government, a more obedient pupil, is pre-

paring the groundwork by threatening a flood: "If the budget is not approved, Portugal could leave the euro."

The Irish government put up more resistance, aware of the political bombshell of what it would mean for a country just beginning to recover its self-government to lose its sovereignty. To force Ireland to take the loan before it holds anticipated general elections and use the money received to buy what its creditors indicate, there will be an obscene landing of bankers representing the trio of the IMF, EU and ECB. The recipe is brutal for a country of 4.2 million inhabitants: 100 billion euros at 5 percent interest and a corresponding austerity plan.

The drama in Ireland, a country that

Continued on page 11

The media and Gaza

'The press wanted to be used'

WW presents here the fourth installment of "The media and Gaza," a chapter from an upcoming book on the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people of Gaza who are fighting for self-determination.

What has [the military-industrial-media complex] meant for reporting?

[Norman Solomon wrote in "War Made Easy"] "By the time of the 1991 Gulf War, retired colonels, generals and admirals had become mainstays in network TV studios during wartime. Language such as 'collateral damage' flowed effortlessly between journalists and military men who shared perspectives on the occasionally mentioned and even more rarely seen civilians killed by U.S. firepower."

In Gulf War 'the press wanted to be used'

Solomon continued: "News coverage of the Gulf War in the U.S. media was sufficiently laudatory to the warmakers in Washington that a former assistant secretary of state, Hodding Carter, remarked (C-Span, 2/23/91): 'If I were the government, I'd be paying the press for the kind of coverage it is getting right now.'"

A media insider who covered the 1991 Gulf War for the New York Times later wrote, "The notion that the press was used in the war is incorrect. The press wanted to be used. It saw itself as part of the war effort." ("War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning," Chris Hedges, Anchor Press, 2003)

The corporate media also see themselves as "part of the war effort" that Israel is waging against Gaza.

Bombing Gaza: 'sweet deal' for arms makers and media

Frida Berrigan, a senior research associate at the World Policy Institute and co-author of the report "U.S. Military Assistance and Arms Transfers to Israel," said in an interview: "So you have maybe 10 weapons corporations in this country that have a stake in — essentially in Israel using its military arsenal so that it can be replenished again." (Democracy Now, Pacifica Radio, July 21, 2006)

The Council for a Livable World Education Fund says most U.S. aid is for the military, while 90 percent of all U.S. foreign aid goes to the Middle East. Like the oil companies, the arms makers are dependent on Middle East business for their huge profits.

Israel is the largest recipient of this aid, at \$3 billion yearly.

Egypt (\$2 billion a year) is the second-largest recipient, with Saudi Arabia not

far behind. These Arab regimes are hated by their own people because they are U.S. clients. They are as unstable as a house of cards and the Pentagon lives in constant fear that they will be overthrown. At the same time, U.S. arms makers can't resist "dumping" weaponry on oil-rich Arab client regimes, obliging them to use their petrodollars to buy overpriced U.S. weaponry. For example, in the 1980s, Saudi Arabia paid \$6 billion for Boeing AWAC spy planes, despite the restriction that they be flown only by U.S. pilots.

Israel is different. This European settler state is the only regime in the area that Washington feels it can really rely on to strike against the people of the Middle East without major ramifications back home. This is why Israel is treated very differently than the Arab regimes by the U.S. government and corporations, including the corporate media.

U.S. taxpayers foot bill for Israel's weapons

Israel doesn't pay for its weaponry. Most of the money "given from the United States, from U.S. taxpayers, to Israel is then spent on weapons from Lockheed Martin and Boeing and Raytheon. [Israel goes] straight to U.S. corporations with U.S. money to buy weapons that are then used in the Occupied Territories and against Lebanon." (Berrigan)

The U.S. gives the Israeli military sophisticated high-tech weapons that it will give to no other government. U.S. arms

makers have joint ventures with Israeli weapons makers. And Israel is the only regime that uses these U.S. weapons regularly and in a big way — against the Palestinians and other Middle Eastern people.

Who are these U.S. weapons makers arming, and how do they connect to the media?

Boeing provided small diameter bombs dropped on Gaza

Boeing is the world's largest aerospace and defense company, with annual sales of \$61.5 billion. According to Indymedia Corporate Watch for 2009, Boeing was involved in sales to Israel of 42 AH-64 Apache fighter helicopters and 18 newer AH-64D Apache Longbow fighter helicopters, 63 F-15 Eagle fighter planes, 102 F-16, F-16 II and F-16 III fighter planes and four Boeing 777 commercial planes, as well as AGM-114D Longbow Hellfire missiles and Arrow and Arrow II interceptors developed in collaboration with Israel Aircraft Industries.

In 2008, the U.S. government approved the sale of 1,000 Boeing GBU-9 small-diameter bombs to Israel, in a deal valued at up to \$77 million. Since each of these bombs weighs only 250 pounds, aircraft can carry more of them and therefore attack more targets. They were dropped on Gaza.

The Disney Co. (ABC) has a direct link with Boeing.

To be continued.



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HARLEM, N.Y.

Haiti protest targets Bill Clinton

Nearly 100 people gathered Nov. 19 in front of Bill Clinton's office on 125th Street in Harlem to demand, "U.S. Out of Haiti! Clinton out of Harlem!" The former U.S. president is head of the commission which decides how foreign aid is spent in Haiti. He essentially controls its budget.

After some speeches, the protesters marched across 125th Street to St. Mary's Church for an anti-imperialist teach-in on Haiti. The speakers there included Omali Yeshitela, chair of Black is Back; Glen Ford, executive editor of the Black Agenda Report; Nellie Hester Bailey, the Harlem Tenants Council; Ashley Smith, the International Socialist Review; Kim Ives, Haiti Liberté; and Ray LaForest, the International Support Haiti Network.

— Report and photo by G. Dunkel



Frozen wages, red-hot profits

President Barack Obama announced the newest attack on workers on Nov. 29 when he proposed a two-year pay freeze for federal employees. Obama stated, “The hard truth is that getting this deficit under control is going to require broad sacrifice.” (whitehouse.gov)

Seeking an empathetic tone, Obama described these workers: “They’re doctors and nurses who care for our veterans; scientists who search for better treatments and cures; men and women who care for our national parks and secure our borders and our skies; Americans who see that the Social Security checks get out on time, who make sure that scholarships come through, who devote themselves to our safety.”

While the U.S. could certainly do without the racist, anti-immigrant border patrol forces, many employees Obama mentions provide services to those who need it most. In proposing a pay freeze, Obama has asked these workers to join the ranks of those they once served, while diminishing the quality and quantity of services available.

There’s one group that Obama isn’t asking — wouldn’t dare to ask — to make any “broad sacrifice.” Just days before Obama’s remarks announcing the federal employee pay freeze, the Commerce Department released a report stating that U.S. businesses made the highest profits on record in the last quarter.

The New York Times reports, “Since their cyclical low in the fourth quarter of 2008, profits have grown for seven consecutive quarters, at some of the fastest rates in history. ... This breakneck pace can be partly attributed to strong productivity growth — which means companies have been able to make more with less — as well as the fact that some of the profits of American companies come from abroad.” (Nov. 23) Put plainly, this means that companies have not only been increasing productivity by laying off workers while making those who remain work even harder, but that they’ve gone around the globe to exploit workers at less-than-poverty wages.

The only federal employees left out of Obama’s pay freeze are those working for the military — because while social services apparently should be put on the altar of “sacrifice,” wars to ensure even

more profit are not.

In the current negotiations over the expiration of the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, Obama should at the very least be demanding the rich owners and executives of these companies pay their fair share of taxes. Instead he’s placing the burden on those with the heaviest load — the workers.

There’s a phrase for these kinds of actions: class war. It’s nothing new; indeed, it’s what capitalism is all about. But these days, it’s too glaring for any but the most obstinate to ignore.

Because of their all-out class war on the working class, the ruling class has been able to attain astronomical profits. As usual, the capitalists use a weak economy to heighten the attack on the workers — using the same “we all need to tighten our belts” rhetoric that Obama is using. But this time, they can’t even claim that they’re suffering.

And yet, they still cry the same tune. “Those of us who have been charged to lead,” Obama said, “will have to confront some very difficult decisions, cutting spending we don’t need in order to invest in the things that we do.” But the very thing that is needed most right now is jobs — paying jobs.

Meanwhile, on Nov. 30 Congress allowed the federal extension of unemployment insurance to expire. As we stated in a previous editorial, this means that 2 million workers will lose their federal benefits in December alone — not to mention those whose benefits have already expired. A day after the report on record-high profits was announced, the Federal Reserve forecasted that more than 10 million workers in the U.S. will remain jobless through 2012 and that unemployment will stay high for years. The Los Angeles Times noted that “some Fed policymakers ... raised the specter of a permanently higher jobless rate for the U.S. economy.” (Nov. 24)

The ruling class is ruthless, heartless and driven by just one thing: profits. Their attacks on the workers will continue until we force them to stop. An all-out offensive by the ruling class requires an all-out response by the working class. Now is the time to organize like hell — to organize to survive, and to organize to destroy the system that perpetuates class war. □

Solidarity with WWP conference

Messages stress economic challenge to working class

By John Catalinotto

In many of the 35 solidarity statements Workers World Party received for its Nov. 13-14 national conference, besides expressing solidarity, the organizations focused on the capitalist economic crisis and the need for workers to combat the austerity programs imposed on the working class. These organizations represent workers and oppressed people, all of whom are facing a ruling-class offensive, whether the particular government is made up of rightist parties, such as in France and Italy, or has social democratic parties in office, such as in Spain and Portugal.

The Caribbean and Latin American Coordinator of Puerto Rico wrote: “We have no doubt that to achieve their goals, capitalism and neoliberalism will continue with the policy of shrinking the government, laying off thousands of workers, and helping even more those who have so much money that they just want to have submissive servants, converted into beasts of burden. This capitalist onslaught requires all of us working in the same direction, as the enemy is the same: finance capitalism and imperialism.”

The Communist Party of Portugal wrote: “In the European Union, the ruling classes have taken advantage of the crisis to launch a major onslaught against working people and their rights. Everywhere, wages are being cut, retirement ages are being raised, social benefits are being destroyed and all aspects of the ‘welfare state’ are being targeted. Capitalism is revealing its exploitive nature to the full.

“In Portugal, where a government of a so-called Socialist Party has been spearheading the offensive for the past five years, the response by the working people has involved some of the largest demonstrations of the past three decades, and a general strike. A new general strike has been called by the country’s largest trade union central, CGTP-IN, for Nov. 24. Our Party is actively engaged in mobilizing working people for this crucial struggle, in defense of their rights and of their livelihood.”

The Workers Party of Belgium wrote that “the coming years are not only a challenge, they are also an opportunity. Working people can understand better than ever since the Second World War that capitalism offers no future for them. As we strengthen our parties, extend our

militant mass work, improve our organizations, we can help the workers find the path towards socialism. That’s our common alternative to this system of worsening conditions for the workers of our countries, for the peoples of this earth.

From Denmark, the Communist Party wrote: “The present crisis and threats to humanity come from imperialism with U.S. imperialism in the center. It is therefore extremely important and most inspiring to us that revolutionaries such as you are working in the very heart of imperialism in order to mobilize the workers and progressive people against their ‘own’ bourgeoisie and its calamities.”

The Pole of Communist Rebirth in France wrote: “Worldwide capitalism is seeking to make workers pay for the structural crises of its system, but now the exploited are beginning to raise their heads. This is true here in France right now, where they are holding large demonstrations and strikes, trying to combat social regression. It is true also in Latin America, where in recent years, strengthened by the example of the Cuban Revolution, the peoples of the continent have struck serious blows against imperialism. From this arises the need for the communists, progressives, to strengthen their links internationally.”

From the Spanish state, the Galician People’s Union (UPG) wrote: “We are aware of the huge difficulties that fighting for socialism in the heart of the empire entails. But we also know how hard the members of the WWP work in their steadfast effort to convince the working class and the people that, in the United States as in the rest of the world, the only way out of the current and future crisis involves a complete overthrow of the current capitalist system.

“This change calls for a strong and organized Party, a proactive Party, and a revolutionary Party.

Once again we send you our most fraternal greetings from Galicia where the communists of the UPG work within the BNG patriotic front in order to achieve national sovereignty for our people as a step along the path towards a socialist society.” □

Fight to free U.S. political prisoners

Continued from page 3

they have been imprisoned for 12 years and are now held in five different states. Three fought in Angola during the anti-apartheid war. In 2009, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review their case. The Five are viewed as national heroes, having sacrificed their liberty in the defense of their country.

Óscar López Rivera, one of 12 Puerto Rican political prisoners, has been jailed for 11 years. He turned down the offer of leniency because, “Accepting the offer is like prison outside of prison.” His release date is July 2027.

Imam Jamil, in jail for eight years, was transferred in 2007 from Georgia to a supermaximum prison in Colorado; Georgia officials decided that he is too “high-profile” an inmate for their prison system to handle.

Marilyn Buck was incarcerated in California for 27 years due to her political activism. She has been compared to famed abolitionist John Brown. Whites who stand against racism and discrimination become “race traitors” and are labeled “terrorists.” She was released on July 15 and died on Aug. 2, surrounded by her friends at home in Brooklyn.

California has imprisoned Ruchell Magee for 42 years; he is the longest-held political prisoner in the U.S.

The activist lawyer, Lynne Stewart, was recently sentenced to 10 years in prison. Mumia’s essay entitled, ‘Punishing Lynn,’ said, “This outstanding lawyer, a 70-year-old grandmother, who is facing the serious threat of breast cancer, was originally sentenced to two years and four months, but the federal appeals court felt that wasn’t enough.”

Mumia’s solidarity statement to the

2005 Millions More Movement in Washington, D.C., said: “We need a movement of millions of the poor, of workers, of women, of youth, of students, of prisoners, of all those dedicated to change to build independent organizations that can’t be bought or sold and will do the work necessary to be free.

“We need a movement of millions to resist the state oppression that has brought us Patriot Acts, but not patriotic actions, wars for empire and countless attacks on the poor. We need a movement of millions to make common cause with oppressed people the world over. In Cuba, in Iraq, in Venezuela, in the Congo, in Haiti, in the Philippines.

“We need a movement of millions that is anti-imperialist, anti-racist and that unites us, not divides us. Let us begin right here.”

Build unity. Build Workers World. □

Fracking, the environment & capitalism

Continued from page 4

movement that is uniting young and elderly, rural and urban, communists and others, despite Homeland Security spying on them for “threatening industry.”

The anti-drilling movement faces other problems. In rural towns, industry pits worker against worker, taking advantage of high unemployment and severe poverty to pressure people to lease their land for gas wells that are poisoning their neighbors’ water.

To grow, this movement must link with struggles for jobs and against union busting.

The bosses see profits and don’t care that drilling causes suffering. They ignore alternative energy technology in favor of controlling global gas supplies. We need to shut this capitalist circus down! □

New study documents Zimbabwe's land distribution successes

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

A new study on Zimbabwe's last decade of land redistribution revealed that millions of Africans have made significant gains in agricultural production and income generation in this former British settler colony. Zimbabwe won its independence in 1980.

Contrary to repeated claims by displaced white landowners, and British and U.S. imperialists and their allies, an objective review and analysis of the removal of 4,000 settlers and the relocation of Africans on these commercial farms illustrate the tremendous strides made since 2000.

Ian Scoones, a professorial fellow at the British Institute for Development Studies, conducted the study entitled "Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities." Scoones examined the land reform process in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe, located in the central south and east of the southern African nation.

Scoones based his research on the actual conditions in Zimbabwe. He tracked the entire process of what the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front calls the Third Chimurenga (liberation struggle). This struggle was precipitated by the British and the U.S.'s failure to provide resources to buy out white-settler farmers, who controlled most of the arable land inside the country even after two decades of national independence.

In 2000 legislation was passed by ZANU-PF under the leadership of libera-

tion movement leader President Robert Mugabe, stripping nearly 20 million acres of land from European-origin commercial farmers who held both Zimbabwean and British citizenship. Tens of thousands of revolutionary war veterans led people onto the farms. They effectively seized control in the region's most advanced land redistribution process during the post-independence era.

Leading up to and after the land seizures in Zimbabwe, the Western imperialist states embarked upon a massive effort aimed at regime-change in the country. With the overt assistance of the white settler-farmers and their supporters in Britain and the United States, the so-called Movement for Democratic Change was founded.

The imperialist states imposed sanctions and launched a sophisticated, well-funded destabilization program against Zimbabwe. Nearly all Western news reports aimed to undermine Zimbabwe's land redistribution. They blamed the ZANU-PF leadership for the economic hardships imposed by sanctions and withdrawal of credit.

Nonetheless, Prof. Scoones' study proves that imperialists and their allies inside Zimbabwe totally fabricated their critical allegations. Not only did millions of Zimbabweans gain access to land stolen from them since the late 19th century, but they increased food production and equalized income distribution.

What Scoones' study of 400 families "found was not what we expected. It contradicted the overwhelmingly negative

images of land reform presented in the media, and indeed in much academic and policy commentary. Problems, failures and abuses were identified for sure, but the overarching story was much more positive: the realities on the ground did not match the myths so often perpetuated in wider debate." (The Zimbabwean, Oct. 21)

One key element of the land redistribution process was the breaking up of many but not all of the large-scale commercial farms controlled by the white-settlers. Scoones notes, "Overall there has been a significant shift to many more, smaller-scale farms focusing on mixed farming, often with low levels of capitalization."

The new resettlements in Masvingo province have "resulted in a very different farming sector, but one that is not without considerable entrepreneurial dynamism and productive potential," Scoones continues.

This report also finds that the collapse of the white export-oriented commercial farming sector brought declines in production within the agricultural industries that dominated during the colonial and post-independence period. For example, between 2001, the year after the land seizures, and 2009, wheat, tobacco, coffee, tea and beef production suffered.

However, as Scoones points out, "Other crops and markets have weathered the storm and some have boomed," including small grains, dry beans and cotton.

Scoones continues, "The agricultural sector has certainly been transformed, and there are major problems in certain areas, but it certainly has not collapsed."

Imperialists continue sanctions

Despite these gains and the formation of a coalition government in 2008 between the ZANU-PF party and two MDC

opposition factions, the British, U.S. and EU states have continued economic sanctions against the country as well as their propaganda aimed at regime-change. Even under the Obama administration, the U.S. has extended the sanctions against Zimbabwe for another year, as well as making policy statements aimed at destabilizing the government.

In a Nov. 19 interview in the state-owned Zimbabwe Herald, African-American religious leader Archbishop George Augustus Stallings announced that he would launch a campaign inside the U.S. to mobilize the clergy to pressure the Obama administration to lift sanctions against the ZANU-PF officials within the government. Stallings said that he had written a letter to President Mugabe pledging to increase his involvement "in dealing with the real issues at hand, not the rhetoric that serves as a distraction therefore hindering progress."

Stallings pointed out in the interview, "If they could enslave and colonize us in the name of Jesus Christ, then trying to force a regime-change in Zimbabwe under the guise of freeing people from an evil dictator is a small drop in the bucket. If Nelson Mandela only just recently had his name removed from the U.S. government's list of terrorists, then President Mugabe, the engineer of Africa's boldest land and mining reclamation programs, can forget it."

ZANU-PF recently announced that the party is preparing for national elections in 2011 after a new constitution is ratified. Consequently, the coalition government with the MDC factions will be dissolved, preparing the way for the reemergence of full political control by ZANU-PF. That party fought for national liberation during the 1960s and 1970s and has maintained power since independence in 1980. □

EUROPE

Political crisis, class struggle & the state

Continued from page 9

spent centuries fighting for independence from England and was now just beginning to regain its sovereignty, is of historic proportions. Marx reappears again: No political independence is possible without economic independence.

Loans, austerity and military spending

But the loss of sovereignty consists not only in implementing savage austerity plans. The country involved must invest the money received in the purchase of what its creditors order. This method, used by the IMF for decades in Latin American countries, in Asia, and recently in the ex-USSR, now comes with the same methods and all its harshness to the countries of the periphery of the European Union.

Very few times is there news of the final fate of those loans. Greece is the EU country with the most military spending: 4.3 percent of its GDP. Military spending has remained high even as the country was sinking, with the austerity plan imposed on the Greek working class and popular sectors in 2010 including a decline in GDP of 4 percent.

Capitalism is confronting this crisis, one without precedent, without it being predictable for now what military confrontations will occur between states, confrontations that fulfill the historical role of eliminating surplus and uncompetitive human capital. The EU will intervene in its peripheral states and make us pay the gap between the productivity and competitiveness of our capitalism and that of France, Germany or England, which will include a broad social war still

difficult to imagine. If we do not find a response, that is the destiny in store for us.

The task [set by the ruling class] is meant to be carried out without hesitation, and governments are preparing it regardless of their political hue. Is it possible to hope, in this scenario, with unemployment of around 30 percent [in Spain], that over a long period spending will remain available for universal services such as health care or education or the public pension system?

In the Spanish state, after the last general strike on Sept. 29, the capitalists now have officially announced an attack on pensions, the destruction of collective bargaining, health co-payment, etc.

We the people are slowly starting to wake up, but the working class, except in Greece, is still far from the realization that what is involved is not simply making a general strike in order to negotiate a solution one way or another. We are facing an attack on all fronts, with no foreseeable end.

The strategic objective of the bourgeoisie and their governments is to destroy the labor movement, which is the only guarantee that their agenda will be imposed without much resistance. Therefore, no European government will move an inch, unless — as was at the point of happening in France — the havoc caused serious problems. Each partial struggle, every strike, must be seen as being a step on the road to an accumulation of forces, strengthening the Europe-wide coordination of struggles, with an eye on the construction, against the power of the bourgeoisie and their governments, of an alternative workers' and peoples' power. □

Arrests made at SOA torture school protest

By **Dianne Mathiowetz**
Atlanta

The School of the Americas Watch reports that five undercover police infiltrated a planning meeting to organize a civil disobedience action following the puppet parade that concluded the annual SOA protest rally on Nov. 20 in Columbus, Ga. (www.soaw.org)

The officers participated in the momentary blocking of Victory Highway, just beyond the permitted rally site, and helped to hold a banner that read "STOP: This Is the End of the Road for SOA." They then testified in court against the seven puppetistas who were arrested.

An additional 17 people were arrested, including a local barber who was standing outside his shop, taking pictures with a cell phone, and members of a Russian news crew who were filming the incident. Many people who were on the sidewalk, leaving the rally area on the way to their vehicles, were swept up by the police action.

Jessica Sully, a 28-year-old mother of two who lives in the Atlanta area, was arrested while walking to a nearby restaurant with friends. As Sully began filming the arrests of the puppetistas, three cops who never answered her question about why she was being arrested grabbed her.

Police roughly put her on a bus with other arrestees, including Russia Today's

correspondent whose wrists were bleeding because the plastic handcuffs were so tight. Sully was not released from the Muscogee County jail until 2 a.m. on Nov. 22, nearly 34 hours after her arrest.

The 24 arrested were charged with failure to disperse and demonstrating without a permit. On Nov. 21 a judge found them guilty of these city charges. Bond and fines for them came to more than \$75,000. Next they are scheduled to go to court on a state charge of unlawful assembly.

Four people successfully entered the property of Fort Benning on Nov. 21: Nancy Smith, Christopher Spicer, Rev. Louis Vitale and David Ormandi. They were protesting SOA training of soldiers from Latin America in counterinsurgency and population control tactics that have led to decades of assassinations, torture, massacres and other human rights violations for tens of thousands of Indigenous people, trade unionists, peasant farmers, community activists and members of religious groups. Notably, no torturer has ever been charged, tried or imprisoned.

On Nov. 23 Rev. Vitale and Ormondi were convicted of federal trespass and sentenced to six months in federal prison. Smith and Spicer will be tried on Jan. 5.

The SOA Watch Legal Defense Fund needs contributions. For information on how to donate, see www.soaw.org. □

Al borde de la guerra

EEUU envía buques de guerra y aviones a Corea

Por Deirdre Griswold

Buques de guerra y jets de combate estadounidenses llevando a más de 6.000 efectivos y reforzados por naves, aviones y 70.000 soldados de las fuerzas armadas de Corea del sur comenzaron a realizar “ejercicios” militares conjuntos en el mar al oeste de Corea el 28 de noviembre. Han llevado a la dividida península al borde de la guerra.

En julio unos 20 buques de guerra estadounidenses y 200 aviones habían realizado maniobras similares con las fuerzas armadas del sur. Así que esta es la segunda vez en menos de seis meses que Washington y el régimen derechista surcoreano de Lee Myung-bak han realizado una grave provocación contra la República Popular Democrática de Corea (Corea del norte socialista).

Ni China, que apenas está a 200 millas al noroeste, puede dejar de estar alarmada por tales movimientos militares agresivos por los EEUU. Dos días antes de que las maniobras conjuntas comenzaran, la Cancillería china dijo: “Tenemos una postura clara y constante sobre esto. Nos oponemos a cualquiera que tome acciones militares en nuestra zona exclusiva económica sin permiso”. (Xinhua, 26 de noviembre) Sin embargo, EEUU y Corea del sur llevaron adelante las maniobras.

Hostilidades comienzan con disparos hacia la RPDC

Esta vez las fuerzas surcoreanas fueron más allá que en julio. Días antes de que los ejercicios conjuntos con EEUU comenzaran, dispararon municiones vivas en las aguas cercanas a la RPDC desde la isla de Yeonpyeong, que se encuentra más lejos al oeste del continente surcoreano y muy cerca de la costa de la RPDC. Tanto la isla como las aguas son territorio disputado. Hace años, EEUU había dibujado arbitrariamente una línea en un mapa alegando que la isla era de Corea del sur, pero la RPDC nunca ha aceptado eso.

Así que los militares que ordenaron estos disparos a la 1:00 P.M. el 23 de noviembre sabían muy bien que esto era una provocación descarada contra la RPDC — una que podría conducir fácilmente a una respuesta similar, especialmente puesto que la RPDC había caracterizado ya estos “ejercicios” como un simulacro de invasión del norte.

Si Corea del sur y su enorme patrocinador EEUU hubieran deseado evitar la confrontación con la RPDC, ¿habrían disparado en un área disputada?

La provocación viene de EEUU y el régimen de Lee Myung-bak, no de la RPDC.

Hora y media después, a las 2:34 P.M., después de haber protestado verbal e inmediatamente, la RPDC tomó represalias

disparando hacia la base militar del sur en Yeonpyeong. Según funcionarios en Seúl, dos soldados murieron. Luego dijeron que también dos civiles habían muerto.

Inmediatamente, el torrente propagandístico tanto en los EEUU como en Corea del sur subió a niveles altísimos, culpando a la RPDC por comportamiento “irracional” y “brutal”. El Pentágono anunció que tendría que enviar al USS George Washington — un portaaviones de propulsión nuclear con casi 6.000 marineros y 75 jets de combate que habían participado en el “ejercicio” de julio más otros cinco buques de guerra para ayudar a las fuerzas del régimen de Lee en las maniobras navales conjuntas.

Aunque los militares surcoreanos toman en última instancia sus órdenes del Pentágono, EEUU adujo que no había estado implicado con los “ejercicios” surcoreanos a la hora del intercambio de artillería. Pero los hechos demuestran lo contrario. El 23 de noviembre CNN.com reportó que “algunas fuerzas estadounidenses habían estado ayudando a los surcoreanos en un ejercicio de entrenamiento militar, pero no estaban en el área de disparos”. Seguro. Eran parte de la provocación pero permanecieron fuera de la escena. Como los “consejeros” estadounidenses en Vietnam en los primeros años de esa guerra.

Sin embargo, incluso con el bombardeo de los medios centrados en inventar razones para la “agresión” norcoreana, a veces se cuela un artículo como ése que desmiente los cuentos.

Thomas D. Farrell, un ex oficial de inteligencia de la Reserva del ejército de EEUU que sirvió en Corea y dice que él no es “ningún apologista para Corea del norte”, explica cómo estos acontecimientos fueron considerados por la RPDC: “Este ataque ocurrió en una isla en el Mar (Amarillo) del Oeste. Aunque hay una línea militar de demarcación bien definida en tierra, no hay una línea bien definida en el océano. La supuesta línea del límite norteño nunca ha sido aceptada por Corea del norte, y ha sido objeto de muchas escaramuzas a través de los años. Una mirada al mapa demuestra que la isla de Yeonpyeong está más bien cerca de Corea del norte. La marina de guerra de la RC [surcoreana] estaba disparando en aguas próximas como parte de sus ejercicios militares anuales de Hoguk, los cuales, como todos los ejercicios militares, son condenados por los norcoreanos como una provocación y un ensayo para la invasión. ...

“El punto es que cuando uno ve este acontecimiento desde la posición del otro, es perfectamente comprensible. Las teorías que procuran explicarlo son frágiles. La verdadera historia es que los norcoreanos vieron las acciones de la marina de guerra de la RC como una provocación y

respondieron como se hubiera esperado”. (Honolulu Star Advertiser, 29 noviembre)

China también se encuentra amenazada

Los medios imperialistas de comunicación están diciendo ahora que la “beligerancia” de la República Popular Democrática de Corea está colmando la paciencia de China. China ha sido aliada de la RPDC desde 1950, cuando fuerzas estadounidenses invadieron Corea del norte, bombardearon todas sus ciudades, y amenazaron al nuevo gobierno revolucionario de China con una guerra nuclear.

Pero mientras China está buscando una solución pacífica a la presente crisis, no puede haber duda de que percibe la beligerancia de Estados Unidos hacia la RPDC como una amenaza para su propio desarrollo pacífico.

Li Jie, investigador de la academia militar naval china, escribía el 12 de julio en el China Daily acerca de los “ejercicios” surcoreano-estadounidenses programados para más adelante en ese mismo mes:

“Un ejercicio conjunto con la República de Corea (del sur) en aguas clave cerca de sus bases asiáticas ayudará a los Estados Unidos a conseguir varios objetivos estratégicos en la región,” decía Li.

“Primero, los ejercicios ayudarán a Estados Unidos a mantener la presión contra lo que ellos denominan el inestable régimen de la República Popular Democrática de Corea. También puede ser una indicación explícita de la postura de EEUU de que la única superpotencia mundial respaldaría con firmeza a la República de Corea y Japón en caso de un conflicto militar entre Pyongyang y los dos aliados asiáticos tradicionales de Washington”.

“Además, un ejercicio militar cuidadosamente planeado en el Mar Amarillo ayudará a Estados Unidos recoger información geográfica y militar de algunos países asiáticos (especialmente de China - d.g.) que bordean sus vastas aguas”.

El “General Xiaotian, subdirector del personal general del Ejército de Liberación del Pueblo, ha expresado una “firme oposición” a las maniobras militares de EEUU-RC”. (China Daily, 12 de julio)

Pero las maniobras de julio ocurrieron de todos modos, y ahora se están repitiendo a un nivel de provocación más alto. China ha llamado a una reunión de emergencia con EEUU, Corea del sur, la RPDC, Rusia y Japón para resolver la situación. Hasta el 29 de noviembre, este llamado ha sido ignorado por las administraciones de Obama y de Lee.

No hay nada de “irracional” en la respuesta de la República Popular Democrática de Corea ni en las preocupaciones de los chinos. El imperialismo estadounidense libró una horrible guerra contra la revolución coreana de 1950 a 1953, de la que

resultaron millones de muertos. Desde entonces ha ocupado Corea del sur, con una fuerza que todavía cuenta con 30.000 efectivos. Ha rechazado siquiera discutir un tratado de paz que finalice formalmente la guerra.

¿Debería ser una sorpresa, entonces, que la Republica Popular Democrática de Corea sepa que tiene que estar preparada en todo momento para repeler otra invasión? Si hasta un oficial de inteligencia retirado del ejército de EEUU sabe que el bombardeo por el sur obligaría al norte a responder, ¿no lo sabrían también los que ordenaron el bombardeo? ¿No era el propósito deliberado de dar la excusa de una mayor amenaza contra la RPDC, con la intención de provocar un “cambio de régimen”?

Expertos estadounidenses están ahora hablando abiertamente de la “reunificación” de Corea sobre la base del sur tragando al norte — en otras palabras, una invasión y contrarrevolución que permita al capitalismo y al imperialismo mano libre para explotar a los/as trabajadores/as y a los/as agricultores.

Esto es algo que los líderes de la RPDC y las masas nunca permitirán.

¿Es sorprendente que los dirigentes chinos también se alarmen cuando el imperialismo estadounidense, mientras hace dinero con las inversiones y el comercio allí, sin embargo trata de cercar militarmente a China?

El Jefe del Estado Mayor Conjunto de EEUU, el almirante Michael Mullen, revela la mentalidad del Pentágono: “No creo que este será el último ejercicio”, dijo. “Esta es una parte del mundo donde hemos hecho ejércidos militares durante décadas y continuaremos”. (CNN, 28 de noviembre)

En lugar de poner propaganda anti-RPDC psicoanalizando sus líderes, ¿por qué los medios de comunicación no preguntan por qué los líderes de EEUU hacen lo que hacen? ¿Por qué han mantenido una política hostil contra la RPDC por más de 60 años, desde su revolución anti-capitalista y anti-colonial? ¿Por qué no firman un tratado de paz con la RPDC para que el pueblo coreano pueda trabajar para un desarme real y para la reunificación?

Pero eso sería reconocer que EEUU está gobernado por una clase de multimillonarios que se ha cebado por la guerra y la explotación en todo el mundo y tiene una larga historia de crear excusas para la expansión sangrienta de su alcance imperial. Los medios de comunicación han sido parte de esta historia ignominiosa, desde que los periódicos de Hearst inventaron una excusa para invadir a Cuba en 1898.

No sucumbamos a las mentiras de otra “Bahía de Tonkin” o “armas de destrucción masiva”. El enemigo de la clase obrera está aquí mismo, en los salones de las juntas ejecutivas corporativas y de los bancos del capitalismo estadounidense que están destruyendo todo lo que el pueblo ha ganado a través de generaciones de lucha y duro trabajo.

¡No a la agresión contra Corea socialista! ¡Alto a los “juegos” de guerra, cese a las sanciones, que se firme un tratado de paz con la RPDC y que se traigan las tropas y los barcos de EEUU a casa! □

LIBERTAD PARA LOS CINCO CUBANOS

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